must be returned to the Senate for further consideration. This delay will effectively kill lobby reform legislation for the rest of the 104th Congress.

This bill expands the registration requirements for lobbyists and requires more disclosure regarding lobbying activities. Specifically, the bill requires those who lobby congressional staff, senior executive branch officials, and Members of Congress to register as lobbyists.

In addition, lobbyists must identify their clients, the general issues on which they lobby, and how much they are paid for their efforts.

While we must ensure that the constitutional right of the people to petition their government is protected, we must also make certain that paid lobbying activities are adequately disclosed. This bill protects both of these principles and deserves our support.

I urge all of my colleagues to support H.R. 2564 without amendment and pass these much-needed lobbying reforms.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT L. METTLER

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 4, 1995

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting Robert L. Mettler of Los Angeles for his philanthropic and civic contributions and for his signal achievements in retail merchandising.

Robert Mettler has found the time, energy, and commitment to sustain a deep involvement in numerous community projects in spite of the demands of three decades of leadership in business. He has been especially committed to the Shelter Workshop Program for the Mentally Retarded, a trailblazing organization headed by Eunice and R. Sargent Shriver. During his residency in Texas, he was a leader of the State of Texas Special Olympics and the United Way of Dallas.

In addition to this work, Robert Mettler serves as chairman of the council of trustees of the National Jewish Center for Immunology and Respiratory Medicine in Denver, CO. He also serves on the leadership panel of Brandeis University in Waltham, MA.

Robert Mettler is one of the best known and most respected leaders in fashion and apparel. On Tuesday, December 12, 1995, Mr. Mettler's friends and admirers will pay tribute to him at a banquet in his honor sponsored by the Fashion Industries Division of the United Jewish Fund.

I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Mettler for the great achievements that have earned him this honor. I wish him many more years of good health and an ongoing active commitment to his philanthropic activities.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2491, SEVEN-YEAR BALANCED BUDGET RECONCILIATION ACT OF 1995

SPEECH OF

HON. STEVE GUNDERSON

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 17, 1995

Mr. GUNDERSON. Mr. Speaker, today as the House considers the conference report on the Seven-Year Balanced Budget Act of 1995, we move one step closer to a goal I have supported for a long while. The first bill I cosponsored as a freshman Representative in 1981 amended the U.S. Constitution to require a balanced Federal budget. At that time, I firmly believed it was time to get our fiscal house in order, when the deficit was $79 billion and the national debt stood at $994 billion.

Fifteen years later, the deficit has grown to $206 billion—nearly three times of what it was in 1981. The national debt has jumped to $4.9 trillion or nearly five times the 1981 level. Further, in fiscal year 1995, we spent $234 billion on interest on the national debt alone. That's 17 percent of the Federal budget. It also represents more than we spent on education, job training, child nutrition and public works projects combined.

Unless we balance the budget, interest on the debt will continue to eat into spending on other worthwhile Federal programs. Just look at how interest on the debt dwarfs our spending on certain vital human resources programs: In fiscal year 1995, we spent 66 times more on interest on the national debt than we did on the Head Start Program. We spent 32 times more on interest on the national debt than we did on the title I program which benefits disadvantaged grade-school kids. We spent 149 times more on interest on the national debt than we spent on all elementary and secondary school improvement programs. We spent 158 times more on interest on the national debt than we did on Federal aid to vocational education, 180 times more than on the JOBS program to get people off welfare, and 212 times more than on Jobs Corps. Clearly this is a distorted sense of priorities.

If we continue our spending priorities for the next 7 years, the deficit would balloon from $210 billion in fiscal year 1996 to $349 billion. That's a 66-percent increase. The national debt would increase by $1.7 trillion during that same period.

Just as increased debt interest threatens programs, the lack of balance between our coveted entitlement programs and discretionary programs is alarming. Entitlement programs such as Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid make up 64 percent of the Federal budget. Discretionary programs, such as defense, education, and job training make up only 36 percent. This disparity is growing and without significant changes in spending priorities, by 2012 entitlement spending will consume the entire budget.

THE SEVEN-YEAR BALANCED BUDGET ACT OF 1995

I believe that we have made the right choices to put this country on a path toward a balanced budget. Back in June, the House approved the budget blueprint that laid the foundation for this change. Today, we actually implement the changes necessary to slow the rate of Federal spending over the next 7 years.

Over the next 7 years we will reduce spending growth and reduce the Federal deficit by a total of $1.2 trillion. But it is important to note that slowing the rate of growth in spending is not a cut. The numbers amply demonstrate this assertion.

Over the last 7 years, between 1989 and 1995, we spent a total of $9.5 trillion. Over the next 7 years, while balancing the budget, we will spend $13.3 trillion. That's $2.6 trillion more than in the past 7 years. If we do nothing, we would spend $13.3 trillion over 7 years. We are not cutting the budget, but are finally putting our own house in order within a reasonable timeframe.

A comparison between spending levels in fiscal year 1995 and levels in fiscal year 2002 shows the effect of imposing fiscal discipline. Under current assumptions, spending would increase by $600 billion or 40 percent. Under the assumption of a balanced budget, spending would increase by $358 billion or 24 percent. Only in Washington would a $358 billion increase be called a cut.

A LOOK AT KEY AREAS FOR THE THIRD DISTRICT

A quick review of the provisions of the Seven-Year Balanced Budget Act reveals challenging but acceptable changes in Medicare, student loan funding, and tax policy. It also reveals a glaring deficiency—the failure to reform Federal dairy programs.

MEDICARE

The Medicare Program has continued to grow exceedingly fast in recent years. The Medicare trustees reported earlier this year that without strengthening the system, Medicare will go broke by 2002. I believe that the budget package maintains the vital commitment to health care for seniors while ensuring that the program will be around far into the future.

Under the budget package, average per beneficiary spending would increase from $4,800 to $6,700 over the next 7 years, or a $1,900 increase per retiree. Most importantly, premiums would remain at 31.5 percent of part B costs. Just as they have since the program was started, premiums would increase slightly every year.

STUDENT LOAN REFORM

The student loan program has provided essential opportunities to those who wish to further their education. But in order to preserve those opportunities far into the future, the House and Senate agreed to reduce the costs of the student loan program by $4.9 billion over 7 years.

Perhaps what is most important about the House-Senate agreement is that it does not increase costs to students or parents. The plan does not eliminate the in-school interest subsidy for undergraduate or graduate students. It does not eliminate the 6-month grace period for students leaving school to begin repaying their loan. It does not modify eligibility or access to student loans, nor does it increase the origination loan fee paid for by students.

Now, let's look at what the plan would do. The budget package would cap the administration's direct student loan program at its current 10 percent level of the student loan volume. As many know, I do not believe the Government should become banker to students. At a time when Congress is trying to refocus the role of the Federal Government toward functions that it does well, the direct loan program heads in the wrong direction.